

IN MEMORIAM

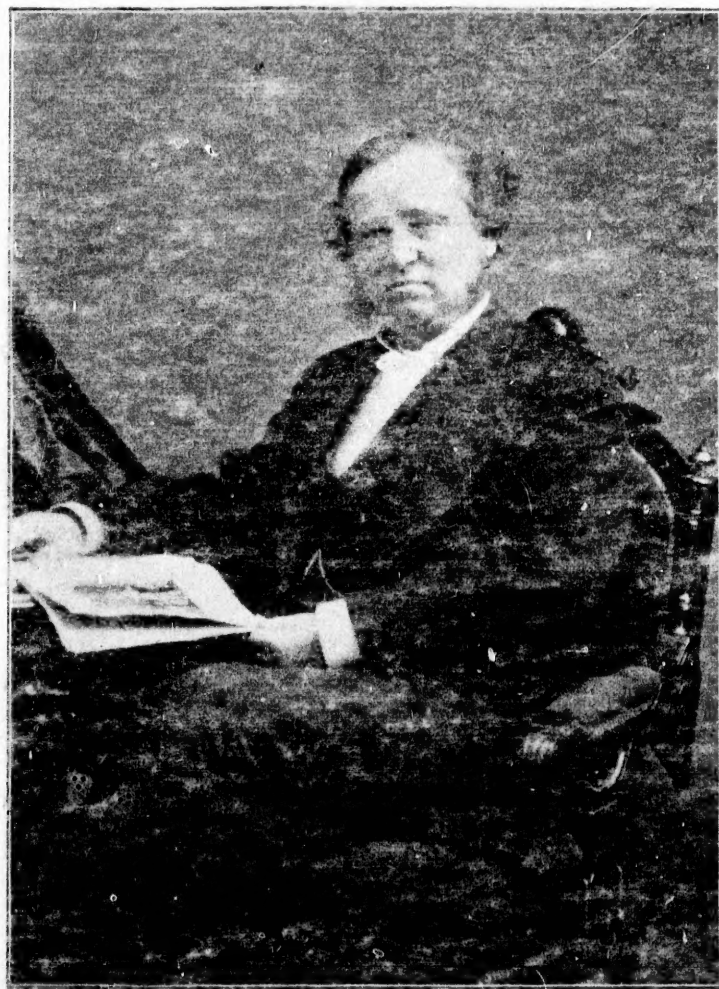
REV. WILLIAM HENRY LAIRD

WHO DIED AT

HAMILTON, ONTARIO

JANUARY 11TH, 1891

CHICAGO  
FRED. C. LAIRD



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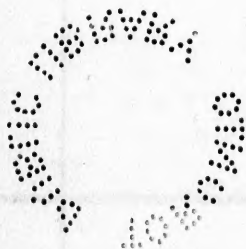
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Feb'y 3 1919



## **REV. W. H. LAIRD.**

### **HIS MASTER CALLED.**

*From The Hamilton Times, January 12, 1891.*

The hand of death yesterday (Sunday) deprived the Hamilton district of the Niagara Conference of the Methodist Church of an able and esteemed chairman, First Methodist Church of a beloved pastor, and the city of an eloquent divine. Announcements of the sudden call to Rev. W. H. Laird were made in most of the Protestant churches throughout the city, and in all, particularly the Methodist, were the deepest feelings of sorrow expressed by the pastors and shown by the people. Nor was the surprise less than the sorrow. Few there were, outside the members of the First Methodist Church, who had any intimation of any illness, and even the greater part of his own congregation did not know that their pastor was sick. Last week he was among his people as usual.

On Thursday evening he was the speaker at the meeting in St. John Presbyterian Church in connection with the week of prayer. He was then, seemingly, in his usual health. On Friday he complained of feeling unwell, but

was able to go about his duties. To his Sunday-school superintendent and members of the church he spoke of a series of special services he was to begin this week, saying that he had decided to hold them on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday evenings. He also spoke of proposed changes in connection with various departments of the church work. He was not well, however, then, and spoke of sharp pains in the region of his heart. On Saturday he kept his bed and was attended by Dr. Day Smith. He seemed to apprehend nothing serious, as far as those who called upon him could see, but, in the light of what since occurred, some of those most closely connected with church work see in his actions on Saturday what to them indicated that he might have had thoughts of the early coming of the white-winged messenger. Late in the evening he insisted that Mrs. Laird should take her rest, and she acquiesced. At 2 o'clock Sunday morning she gave him his medicine and then both fell asleep. Shortly before 4 o'clock, Mrs. Laird was aroused by the noise of her husband's peculiar breathing. She quickly arose, but consciousness had fled from the sick man and in a few moments he expired. Death was the result of neuralgia of the heart.

Rev. Mr. Laird was a fine type of man, physically, and one who might be considered destined for many years of service. He was a Canadian by birth and has spent all his life in this vicinity. He was born at Ancaster,



county of Wentworth, fifty-five years ago. His father was a native of Ireland, while his mother was a Canadian, having been born in Ancaster township about the beginning of this century. When a lad, Mr. Laird entered the employ of Mr. Charles Magill (now Col. Magill, and recently mayor of the city), who at that time kept a large dry-goods store. Mr. Laird and a fellow clerk, named Tew, were converted at a revival conducted by Rev. James Caughey in the "Brick Church," as Wesley Church was called before the building of Centenary. Both decided to enter the university and went to Victoria College in 1853. In 1855 when twenty years of age Mr. Laird was received on trial and stationed at Lindsay. In 1856 and 1857 he attended college again and in 1858 he was stationed at Toronto East. In 1859 he was ordained and received into full connection with the church. In 1859 he was pastor of the Methodist Church at Glanford; 1860-61-62 he spent in the charge at Cainsville; the next three years at Watertown and then three years at Port Dover. In 1869 he was stationed at Dundas, where he spent two years. From there he went to Woodstock, where he spent three years. In 1874 he was transferred to the Toronto Conference and stationed in Oshawa; next he spent three years in Whitby and then three in Port Hope. In 1882 he was called to Elm Street Church, Toronto, where he remained a conference term, after which, in 1885 he went for his second term to Wood-



stock. From there in 1888 he was sent to First Methodist Church, and would have completed his term of service had he lived until June next.

His coming among the people of the First Methodist Church was not of his own choice; another had been called and Mr. Laird was placed in a somewhat embarrassing position when the conference thought it best to send him. His first sermon stamped him as a man full of manliness and character, and he was warmly welcomed. Soon all learned to love him and his two and a half years of service have been most pleasant, the congregation heartily inviting him to remain at the close of each year. The church has prospered under his charge as may be seen by the improvements that have been made in and about the building and in connection with the services. A short time ago he accepted a call to the Methodist Church, Dundas, and would have gone there next June. He was recognized wherever he went as a man of ability, a fact which is attested by the number of times he has been made chairman of the districts he has been in, by his fellow clergymen.

As a man, Mr. Laird was sociable, and was therefore a favorite among his brethren. He was plain and straightforward in his speech and an able orator. He had often said he thought he would die suddenly.

In 1860 he was married to Miss Burke, of Cobourg, who survives him. Four of their children are also liv-

ing: Mr. F. C. Laird, of Chicago; Mrs. Andrew Laidlaw, of Woodstock; Mr. Harry W. Laird, of the Port Hope *Times*, and Master Roland, who is at home. Mr. Laird was a brother-in-law to Rev. N. R. Willoughby, M. A., D. D., Toronto; Rev. J. W. Holmes, of Owen Sound, and Rev. J. W. Totten, of Oshawa, the four Methodist ministers having married four sisters.

## HONORED BY HIS BRETHREN.

### THE FUNERAL SERVICE FOR THE LATE W. H. LAIRD.

*From The Hamilton Spectator, Wednesday, January 14, 1891.*

One of the most solemn and impressive events that has taken place in Hamilton was the funeral service in the First Methodist Church yesterday (Tuesday) afternoon, a service of mourning over the death of the late pastor, Rev. William Henry Laird. It was a spontaneous, sincere, and a deeply affecting tribute to the memory of a good man and a faithful minister of the gospel.

The church was crowded. Even the aisles were filled. Many in the large congregation wore deep mourning. Every face gave evidence of the solemnity of the occasion, and in the course of the long service many were moved to tears.

The pulpit and reading-desk and the front of the choir gallery were draped in black. Against the front of the pulpit rested a bank of white flowers, in this instance at least fitting emblems of the blameless life whom all mourned. Nearly every member of the large choir was present, and all were in mourning.

At three o'clock, after a short prayer had been offered

up in the parsonage, the remains of the deceased clergyman were conveyed into the church, the following, of his intimate friends, acting as pall-bearers: Rev. S. Lyle, B. D., Hon. R. Moreton, Rev. James Gray (Toronto), Rev. Christopher Cookman (West Flamboro'), Rev. John Saunders, M. A. (Port Dover), Rev. S. Cleaver, B. A. (Dundas). Immediately following the casket were a large number of the relatives of the deceased clergyman, and also the members of the Trustee and Quarterly Boards of the church, in a body.

Among those present as representatives of the Methodist Church were, from Toronto, Revs. Wm. Briggs, D. D., John Potts, D. D., E. H. Dewart, D. D., W. J. Maxwell, James Gray, Messrs. Warring Kennedy, James Aikenhead, John Segsworth; Revs. J. S. Williamson, Oakville; John Wakefield, Chairman of Milton District; John Saunders, M. A., Chairman of Simcoe District; D. L. Brethour, Chairman of St. Catharines District; A. E. Russ, M. A., Chairman of Woodstock District; the following members of Hamilton District of which deceased was Chairman: Revs. G. A. Mitchell, Financial Secretary; T. A. Moore, District Secretary; Richard Rowe, Barton; John Hockey, Stoney Creek; Charles Bowlby, York; C. Cousins, Caledonia; David Chalmers, Glanford; J. P. Bell, Binbrook; E. B. Stevenson, B. A., Ancaster; D. Ecker, Tapleystown; Revs. D. G. Sutherland, D. D., J. S. Ross, M. A., John Pickering, Dr.

Burns, D. Lounsbury, Thos. Stobbs, Stephen Kapelle, Frances Coleman, Wm. Morton, R. J. Elliott, John Laycock,, J. H. Bell (A. M. E.); F. Fergusson, Watertown; H. J. Hiltz, Dundas; Isaac Tovell, St. Catharines; J. W. Cooley, Brantford; George Kirby, B. A., Woodstock; George Clark, M. A., Milton; J. H. Hazlewood, Grimsby; J. G. Foote, Oakland; George Calvert, Paris; Harry M. Hall, Lynden; J. E. S. Bailey, Sheffield; T. Webster Kelly, Caistorville; Thos. Orme, Milford; Thos. Athoe, Carlisle; J. H. Robinson, Hagersville; D. M. Taylor, Port Colborne: Ministers of other denominations—Revs. John Morton, Hon. and Rev. R. Moreton; S. Lyle, B. D.; Mungo Fraser, D. D., J. Laidlaw, D. D., J. Murray, Dr. Scott, R. G. Boville, M. A. and Canon Curran.

## THE MEMORIAL SERVICE.

Rev. John Kay, of Brantford, President of the Niagara Conference, took charge of the service, which was opened by singing hymn No. 601.

### THE SAINTS GLORIFIED.

- 1 Give me the wings of faith to rise  
Within the veil, and see  
The saints above, how great their joys,  
How bright their glories be.

### CHORUS.

Many are the friends who are waiting to-day,  
Happy on the golden strand;  
Many are the voices calling us away,  
To join their glorious band.  
Calling us away, etc.

- 2 Once they were mourners here below,  
And poured out cries and tears;  
They wrestled hard, as we do now,  
With sins and doubts, and fears.

- 3 I ask them whence their victory came;  
They, with united breath,  
Ascribe their conquest to the Lamb,  
Their triumph to His death.

- 4 They marked the footsteps that He trod,  
His zeal inspired their breast;  
And, following their incarnate God,  
Possessed the promised rest.

§ Our glorious Leader claims our praise,  
For His own pattern given;  
While the long cloud of witnesses  
Show the same path to heaven.

PRAYER—REV. JOHN WAKEFIELD.

Almighty God, we approach Thee this day under circumstances which are perfectly understood by Thee. The secrets of every heart in Thy presence are read by Thee and Thou knowest every wound our spirits feel. Thou understandest the necessity of every one before Thee, and we humbly pray that Thou wouldst give us grace for this hour's duty, and we ask that Thou wouldst help us to lift our hearts and feel that we are coming into the presence of a sympathizing Savior, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, and who waits to do for us much more than we could ask or think. Thy ways, O God, are beyond us. They are a great deep, and we have never been able to fathom them. We bless Thee, O God, that Thou art to Thy people a Father and friend, a friend who sticketh closer than a brother, and that no good thing shall be denied any one of us who puts his trust in Thee. Thou hast brought us together to-day on an occasion of great sorrow and almost overwhelming grief; yet we are glad to say we are able to look ahead to a better time with the joyfulness of the Christian hope; to the time when we shall meet our dear departed brother and enjoy those felicities and glories which can only be enjoyed by



the faithful at God's right hand. We come before Thee with deep contrition, realizing that we are in the presence of death, that we have not been as we should have been, and doubly conscious of our manifold and grievous failings. We return Thee devout thanksgiving in this hour for the grace that Thou didst give to our departed friend and brother and we adore Thee, for his early conversion and for his consecration to Thy work, for the work Thou hast enabled him to do, and for the strength Thou didst vouchsafe him, to fit him to live a godly life and remain faithful unto death. And through the strength of Thy grace he has remained faithful unto the end and entered into rest. We bless Thee for the Christian faith and love and life and for his faithfulness, and for his devotion and faithfulness to his church and Thy work. He was faithful in his life-work in Thy service, and we believe Thou hast said unto him: "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

And now, blessed God, we humbly beseech Thee to come with all Thy grace and peace, and pour balm on these stricken hearts. Go, we pray Thee, to that stricken home, and grant that all-sufficient grace may be given to those who weep the loss of one so near and dear, to enable them to see in the great affliction the hand of a tender and loving father. Grant Thy abundant grace to her whose partner in life has so suddenly been removed,

and may Thine hand-maiden be enabled to say, "It is the Lord." Grant the consolations of that grace which Thou only can bestow, and may she feel in this, the darkest hour of her life, that the God of Jacob is with her. And in this hour we plead for Thy blessing on the children. God bless the little boy; bless the two sons who have gone to form homes for themselves. And, O Lord, bless the daughter. Bless them all, and may they never forget the rich legacy of a father's love, a father's example, a father's prayers; and may they be able to follow, as he followed, Christ Jesus. May they be found at last, a family unbroken before Thy throne.

O God, bless this stricken congregation! May they not be scattered. May the words that have been spoken—possibly over and over again—when perhaps they have not been heeded, come to them and find a place in their hearts, and may the preacher gone from this district and congregation be more fruitful after he is gone than while he lived. God grant that there may be given to them precious memories of the word as it fell from the lips of our dear brother. May they reflect on the absolute certainties of death and attend carefully, prayerfully and well to the lessons and instruction on Christ and Salvation given to them. One of the standard-bearers has fallen; one whom we greatly loved has been taken from our midst. We thank Thee for it. We would not call him back if we could. Thou hast taken him to a greater and richer

reward, and the grace Thou hast given him is pleasing to us. May it lead to more consecration, more earnest endeavor on our part to follow in the pathway which God has marked out for us, even down to the end of the journey. We are at Thy feet. O, come to us now! Speak to our hearts! Fill us with the gladness of Thy blessings, the fullness of Thy grace, the brightness of Christian hope, the anticipations of reward, so that even this funeral service will bring us nearer to Thee than anything has ever done before. Bless those who have to speak. Give them power and wisdom, and enable them to speak as will best please God; and all we ask is in the name of Him who taught us to pray, "Our Father who art in heaven," etc.

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ANTHEM BY THE CHOIR.

"Unveill thy Bonom Faithful Tomb."—Air ' Dead March in Saul."

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Revs. J. S. Ross, Centenary Church, Hamilton; Dr. Dewart, Toronto, and Rev. Messrs. Williamson and Brethour, were called to the platform.

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REV. MR. ROSS

Read the 131st Psalm: "Bless the Lord O my soul; all that is within me bless His holy name," etc.

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REV. MR. WILLIAMSON

Read 2. Corinthians, chap. v., verses 1 to 10.

**REV. DR. DEWART**

**Read : Thessalonians, chap. iv, verses 13 to 18 inclusive.**

**Rev. John Kay then called the following to the platform: Bro. Warring Kennedy, Rev. Dr. Potts, Toronto; Rev. Dr. Briggs, Hon. and Rev. R. Moreton, Hamilton.**

**THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS.**

**REV. JOHN KAY.**

My dear friends, a brother, beloved, has fallen at his post of duty with his head, his hands, and his heart full of work for the master, Christ, and we have assembled as his brothers and companions, to offer words of sympathy, to pray together for the blessing of God to help us to make a wise use of a mournful event, and to join in songs of praise and shoutings of joy over the glorious victory, achieved by one whom we so well knew and loved.

The Rev. William H. Laird, a true man of God, a most loving brother minister and faithful pastor has passed away from us. We cannot call him back again; we shall go to him but he shall not return to us. "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

To be a true man of God is the grandest achievement of human character and it is the crowning glory of his

life that his friends may say of him when gone, "He was a good man." Humble, kindly spirited, forgiven and forgiving and walking with God in the atmosphere of prayer and personal communion, his life has been a faithful testimony, and to the thousands of people he "being dead yet speaketh." To the brotherliness and geniality of his spirit every one who knew him can testify. More than ordinarily cheerful when with his companions for social converse and brotherly counsel, he always made them feel at home. His language invariably chaste and pure, his character stainless, his warm hand-grasp was felt to be of the genuine kind. We will greatly miss him. Of the faithful pastor hundreds before me, and thousands more throughout the province, can testify, and if there were opportunity would gladly do so this day in words of burning earnestness and loving friendship. But he has gone! His work on earth is done! I shall not say that his ministry has closed; for it may be that He who has promoted him to the Church above, may have some higher office and more extensive work for him than he could possibly have done on earth. The ministry in God's Church never dies. Men may die, but the office and work, like the covenant of God, are everlasting. Aaron dies, but Eleazar takes the holy office and the work goes on. The Apostles die and holy men follow them in labors abundant. John Wesley died, and the ministers, the fruits of his labors, took his place;

and so it is in all the Churches of Jesus Christ. Generations of men and ministers pass away, but the ministry and Church of Christ, immortal and eternal, live on. God buries his workmen but carries on His work. *He* lives, and so do His children, for what we call death is only the low, dark doorway through which He leads them to crowns of glory and a full reward.

I do sincerely pray that upon his family there may come such a sense of the heavenliness of the hour that our widowed sister, and her children and friends, may feel that the very air is full of heaven and light. I pray that upon his brethren in the conference and the ministry there may rest a double portion of his spirit and the plenitude of the Holy Ghost, and that upon his beloved Church and congregation, the Holy Spirit may come in mighty power and pentecostal grace. I will say no more. I could not refrain from saying these few words as an expression from his brethren in the conference; others will speak at greater length and to better purpose. He has gone, and in thought and faith we follow him:

"Servant of God, well done!  
Thy glorious warfare's past;  
The battle's fought, the race is run,  
And thou art crowned at last."

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REV. MR. BRETHOUR

Announced Hymn No. 615, which was sung.

**"SO SHALL WE EVER BE WITH THE LORD."**

- 1 **"Forever with the Lord!"**  
Amen! so let it be!  
Life from the dead is in that word,  
'Tis immortality!  
Here in the body pent,  
Absent from Him I roam.  
Yet nightly pitch my moving tent  
A day's march nearer home.
- 2 **My Father's house on high,**  
Home of my soul how near!  
At times to faith's unclouded eye,  
The golden gates appear;  
Ah! then my spirit faints  
To reach the land I love,—  
The bright inheritance of saints,  
Jerusalem above!
- 3 **"Forever with the Lord!"**  
Father if 'tis Thy will  
The promise of that faithful word  
Even here to me fulfill.  
Be Thou at my right hand,  
Then can I never fail;  
Uphold Thou me, and I shall stand,  
Fight, and I must prevail.
- 4 **So when my latest breath**  
Shall rend the veil in twain,  
By death I shall escape from death  
And life eternal gain,  
Knowing as I am known  
How shall I love that word,  
And oft repeat before the throne,  
"Forever with the Lord!"



Rev. Mr. Kay.—I have to intimate that arrangements have been made for two or three brief addresses on this occasion, most of them, if not all, by old, and dear, and very intimate friends of our deceased brother. The first I shall call upon is Brother Warring Kennedy, of Toronto.

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MR. WARRING KENNEDY'S ADDRESS.

*Dear Christian Friends:* I feel honored in being asked to take part in this, to me a very solemn, service. Being a representative of Elm Street Church, Toronto, where our dear departed brother labored with us for three years, a few of the brethren, with myself, are here to-day, and to us it is a very solemn occasion. We are reminded that this is not our rest; that we have no continuing city, and the beautiful words of the Apostle read in our hearing—the fifth chapter of Second Corinthians—bring before us this thought in a beautiful figure, comparing our bodies with an earthly tabernacle. It brings before us the transitory state of man—how short-lived he is. It compares this body to a house, because of its beauty and symmetry, but also because this is the dwelling place of an immortal soul and of the Holy Spirit. The Apostle regulates our thoughts a little. It is not a house sure to endure for a number of years, but a house, like a mud-walled cottage, liable to tumble down about us; about which the winds of sorrow

and temptation and trial blow, and whose walls are permeated and softened and undermined by the waters of grief and affliction till it finally yields and falls in ruin before the blasts of Death. But even the earthly cottage, with its mud-walls, he considers of too permanent a character to serve as a simile for this bodily tenement of the soul, so he calls it a tabernacle; such a tabernacle as is spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, built of stakes and covered over with branches of trees, erected in the evening and taken down in the morning, or, at most, in a few days. Our fading beauties disappear, our short-lived bodies die away. Brethren and sisters, this is not our rest. Here we have no abiding city. God has been pleased to make us with susceptibilities so that we are readily influenced by surrounding circumstances. Sometimes it is to uplift us; sometimes to depress us. In the spring we rejoice with the glad, singing birds and in the sombre autumn when the sighing winds blow around us the falling leaves, we are depressed. And God has placed that sympathy in us to rejoice with those who rejoice and to weep with those who weep. This event which has called us together to-day is one eminently calculated to produce in each of us feelings of the utmost seriousness; feelings of the deepest and most profound sorrow. As has been referred to before to-day, one of the leaders of God's great Sacramental host has been suddenly taken away from us. It is a very touching event.

The scene is always a sad one. When a leader is carried to the grave by those who have marched under him and when the drum is muffled and the flag is rolled up, we all feel it to be a solemn event. Our dear brother was one of the leaders in God's sacramental host, but he is gone to his reward and we will soon follow his body to the grave. It is to my heart a very solemn occasion. We are thus again reminded that this is not our rest. Ah, little did I think three Sundays ago, when I spent a happy day with Brother Laird and with this congregation that I would be called on to visit this place again and on such a sad occasion. I remember at the morning breakfast before I left him, and while we were engaged in pleasant conversation I said to him, "Brother Laird, humanly speaking, you are good for another decade of active labor in the church; you might even last out the half-century." He smiled as he replied, "Oh, life is very uncertain, you know. But if I last till the people no longer welcome me, I'll superannuate and go on the lumber shelf." But ah, he had no idea then of this sudden call to end his labors here, and to take up the praises of God before His throne. Thirty years ago I knew him when he labored at the old Adelaide Street Church in the city of Toronto. He was a worker too, and popular with his people. We knew him at Elm Street Church as a man who had very few equals as a pastor and as a friend. He was a man of the highest integ-

rity; a man who hardly knew how to set about to do a mean thing. He was the soul of honor. Of his ministry, I think I speak guardedly, when I say it was the most successful year that ever was passed by Elm Street Church—the year when so many were gathered in under him, during the labors of the Rev. Thomas Harrison. As a preacher he was clear and convincing, never failing to uphold the doctrines of the Methodist Church and the truths of the blessed gospel. He never gave an uncertain sound. As a pastor Mr. Laird was blessed with a winning manner and gospel power. Whenever he visited among the families of the church, he was welcome. I well remember his tenderness of heart. During the sickness of my beloved daughter, who has since passed within the veil, I had occasion to experience and appreciate his tenderness of heart and comforting sympathy. I remember that whenever he came Mrs. Kennedy used to say: "I do so like to hear the prayers of Brother Laird. There is a sweetness and tenderness and pathos in them that I love to hear." Yes, he was a kind friend. He would go any distance to serve or oblige a member of his congregation. As a pastor and instructor we shall see him no more. He is gone. His Spirit is with his God; his body is here. Those eyes with which he gazed on this congregation so often are now curtained in death. That tongue which was wont to sing the praises of God (and I remember when we sang "Beulah Land" together so

often)—that tongue is now silent in death, but, God be thanked, he has reached "Beulah Land." Those hands, which so often and so willingly ministered to the necessities of the needy, are now folded in death; and those feet, which so often bore him to works of good, are now stiff and cold. But his life leads us to look forward with a glorious hope to the period when all this condition of things will be changed, and when there shall be no more death. He is now among the blest ones, garlanded with the love that shall never fade away. He is wearing the palm of victory in the presence of his God. He has joined the noble army of martyrs and reposes with the first-born of God, rejoicing to see the Lamb of God whom angels but dimly see, gazing transported at the sight through all eternity. Yes, my friends, there is something that is very consoling in our blessed religion. What would we do in seasons of trial if we had not the sustaining and supporting power and comforting assurance of the blessed gospel? Nor are we only sustained and comforted; we are pointed to that rest which is prepared for the people of God. I think of those beautiful words in which we are told that earth shall be swallowed up, as the earth swallowed up Dathan and Ahiram, so shall death and sin be swallowed up. They shall be his people and God himself shall be with them; they shall be His people and He shall be their God. There shall not be any more sigh-

ing or sorrow or pain. Blessed be God for the comfort and promises of our holy religion.

And now brethren, we are here to-day in order to bear testimony to the worth of a dear departed brother. He is no longer with us, but his memory will long remain dear. We say, farewell, Brother Laird. Good night; we will meet you in the morning.

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REV. MR. KAY.—There are many present who would like to add their testimony to the worth of our departed brother, but there is not time. Dr. Potts, who is here, will say a few words.

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REV. DR. POTTS' ADDRESS.

*Dear Friends:* I have unexpectedly been called upon to say a few words on this sad occasion. Toronto Methodism was greatly startled on Monday morning when some of us received messages of the death of our dear friend whose mortal remains lie before us to-day. Lately we have been called upon as a church to suffer heavy losses. Within a few years past we have watched the departure of such men as Rev. Egerton Ryerson, Anson Green, Lauchlan Taylor and others, but when they passed away, some of them had passed the border line of four-score years and finished their work and in the nat-



ural order of things, the time had come for them to be buried out of our sight—for them to go from labor to rest. But lately when Hamilton was called on to lament the death of Samuel J. Hunter, and on Sunday morning last, of Reverend W. H. Laird it seemed different. They were about our own age and time of service in the ministry. While many of us felt that Death was a grand old father, who would yet call us, yet when such as Mr. Hunter and Mr. Laird—the latter so suddenly—received his call, it came very near to some of us.

Dear brethren, we are at a Christian funeral to-day. Those hymns that have been sung we have been able to sing in all their rich fullness of meaning. Those glorious and inspiring Scriptures that have been read, we know what they mean, and there is a tribute for Brother Laird in the laymen as well as the ministers who have come from Toronto and elsewhere to do honor to the memory of a noble Christian man. I never touched or talked to Brother Laird but I found I was dealing with a thorough Christian gentleman. Gentle as a lady; courageous as a lion; full of the elements of strength and the elements of sympathy and tenderness. And so I think of the time a few weeks ago when I occupied this pulpit and he sat with me on this platform and stepped with me into the vestry at the close of the service and said a few kind words about the influence of the service on his own heart, as well as on the congregation, and I



felt I was dealing with a brother. And he is gone! God grant that we who loved him may be baptized with a deeper, fuller, more effectual baptism of the Holy Ghost. Some of us may not have many years of service left us, but whatever it may be, whether our time be brief or long, let us be found as he was found when the message reached him, at our post of duty. And here let me pause to express my pleasure that in this hour the heartfelt expressions of regard for our departed brother and sympathy for the bereaved ones, comes not only from the Niagara and other conferences of the Methodist Church, in which he was so much beloved, but that such testimony is borne and sympathy extended by the numerous representatives of the Episcopal, Presbyterian, Congregational, and Baptist Churches, present here to-day. Brethren, let us take to heart the lesson of our dear friend's death. In the presence of death, in the presence of life, let us give our hearts to Him; let us so live that whether our death may be sudden, like that of our dear brother, or by slow and lingering disease, death's call will be but the coming of the angels to escort us home to everlasting joy with him.

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REV. MR. KAY

Announced Hymn No. 606.

"OF WHOM THE WHOLE FAMILY IN HEAVEN AND EARTH ARE NAMED."

1 Come let us join our friends above  
That have obtained the prize,  
And on the eagle wings of love  
To joys celestial rise.  
Let all the saints terrestrial sing,  
With those to glory gone;  
For all the servants of our King.  
In earth and heaven, are one.

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REV. DR. BRIGGS' ADDRESS.

This brief obituary notice of our dear departed brother was handed to me just before coming into the church this afternoon, and I will now read it:

Rev. William Henry Laird was born in Ancaster, County of Wentworth, in March, eighteen hundred and thirty-six, and at his death was consequently fifty-five years of age. His father was a native of Ireland, while his mother was a Canadian by birth, whose home was in Ancaster. When a lad, Mr. Laird entered the employ of Mr. (now Col.) Chas. Magill, who, at that time, was engaged in the dry-goods business. At the age of eighteen he was converted to God under the preaching of Rev. James Caughey, who was conducting services at that time in what was known as the "Brick Church"—now Wesley Church. Shortly afterward—in 1853—he entered the University of Victoria College to prepare for the work of the Christian ministry. In 1885, he was received on trial for the ministry and stationed at Lind-

say. In 1856 and 1857, he attended college again, and in 1858 he was stationed on Toronto East Circuit. In 1859 he was received into full connection and ordained. He was stationed as follows:

In 1859 at Glanford; in 1860-61-62 at Cainsville; in 1863 to 1866 at Waterdown; 1866 to 1869 at Port Dover; 1869 and 1870 in Dundas. Then there followed three years in Woodstock, after which he was stationed successively in Oshawa, Whitby, and Port Hope. In 1882 he went to Elm Street Church, Toronto, and after that to Woodstock for his second term. In 1888 he was stationed in the First Methodist church, where his period of service has been so suddenly terminated by death. In 1860 he married Miss Burke, of Cobourg, who survives him. He was Chairman of Districts from 1874 to 1880, again from 1885 to 1888, and in 1890 he was elected Chairman of this, Hamilton District.

Brother Laird was, during his ministry, pre-eminently solicitous for the salvation of souls and was never satisfied unless he saw such fruits of his labors. He was a typical minister of the best type—brotherly, genial, social, and kindly in all his relations; he had a place in the warmest corners of the hearts of his friends. He cherished a high ideal of Christian character and was scrupulous in his conscientiousness, manly and courageous in the discharge of his duty, and, above all, a God-fearing, patient, and unworldly man. As a preacher, he

was attractive and winning in the persuasiveness of his manner, earnest and evangelical in spirit, and practical, plain and faithful in his exposition of the Word of Life. In his administration he was ever faithful to the policy of the church, lived in thorough harmony with his brethren, and as a pastor was a shepherd who sought constantly the highest welfare of those committed to his charge.

And now a few words from my own heart concerning Brother Laird. I did not know of the death of Brother Laird till yesterday forenoon. I was away from Toronto, preaching, and returning home yesterday morning was so engaged in conversation with a brother minister on the train that I did not read the daily papers, and it was only when Dr. Willoughby saw me at the Union Station that I learned of the sad loss we all had sustained. William H. Laird dead! I could hardly believe it. But a few days ago he was in the book-room, seemingly in his usual state of health and spirits, and came up to my office with his cheery smile and pleasant speech. We parted then, promising to see each other soon again. But, alas! not again to our hearing will he lift up his voice, or speak, or do any act. Oh, what a mystery is death! It is the problem of the ages. It is a land without any order, as Job calls it. Death comes to all. It does not take as its rule first the very old, and then the old, and then the youth, and then the child. True, it

comes to the ripe in years and they go out as a shock of grain, ripe in its season. But to others it comes when the bud is hardly opened, before a leaf falls, before the flower has lost its fragrance. It came to Brother Laird, when, as Brother Kennedy said, he might have looked forward to a decade of work in the service of his Master. But if he had been able, when the summons came, to speak what was in his heart he would have said in the words of Wm. Morley Punshon, "that Christ was to him a great reality." Death has in all ages struck terror into humanity. Because of this death we are here to-day, assembled to pay the last tribute of respect to a dear departed friend; and to express our deepest sympathy, in the hour of their sorrow and bereavement, for the afflicted family. I am sure every heart in this large congregation went out to them with the petition of Brother Wakefield. Jesus is a constant comforter, a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. And where can we more appropriately speak our deep sense of loss and sympathy for those upon whom the blow falls most heavily, than in this church where he labored so faithfully. "Friend after friend departs," but when the parting is so sudden, like a soldier falling in the field with his sword still warm from the battle, it is a pleasing reflection to be able to say, "He fought a good fight." Death comes in various ways; none knows when the summons may be his. The little child, nestled in his mother's arms to-

day, may be on his bier to-morrow. Each of us may be very near to death. It is God who casts us down and lifts us up. His voice is heard in the storm as well as in the sunshine, in the widow's sob, as well as in the smile of the child. As the long procession of the dead is taken to the tomb, how quickly sounds the warning: "Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye know not the Son of Man cometh." Be ye also ready! Brother Laird was found ready. His welcome greeting was "Well and faithfully done; enter into My joy; sit thou on My throne." We know not, any of us, the day or the hour of the day death may come to us. It may be in the dead of night, when all nature is hushed, that our heart may give one beat and then forever be still; or it may be in the dawn of day, when the light is just breaking gray in the East, that the angel may come to take us across the cold river, but oh, friends, we may suppose a thoroughly quiet, darkened room in which friends will eagerly catch the failing breath, and where silence and the gathering gloom will fall from off the wings of Death. We shall not hear the fateful words in hushed and solemn tone: "He is gone." When the last great change will come, we will not be there. It is hidden from us where it will be, and it is best. It matters not if we are, as our dear departed brother was, death will be but the end of sorrow, the gateway to everlasting bliss.

There are three groups of mourners gathered here to

pay the last sad tokens of respect to our departed brother.

A house has lost its honored and beloved head; a community a worthy citizen whom it respected, and this church has lost its beloved pastor.

We say, come, Memory, and we will wander with thee down the by-gone years. I remember when I was stationed here, and preached regularly in this church, twenty-five years ago. It was then I became acquainted with William Henry Laird, and since that time it has been a warm and close and brotherly and confidential friendship. I have known him in his own house; I have known him as a hearer sitting under his ministry; I have known him in conference and in committees, and in all the various works of a minister's life, and in the presence of life and death and eternity I would not speak flatteringly, and I never knew him to do other than make truth nobler, to make life earnest, to make truth faithful. He was a man of gifts and power. It was easy for William Henry Laird to pray. He was a man of prayer. I have been with him at the week-night services and at the Sunday services, and I have felt that he was specially gifted to go to the mercy-seat. He was accustomed to go frequently and he was gifted with power from God. He was a preacher of the Word of God in its purity and power; he made the pulpit a teaching-place, and he preached the old, old story of Jesus and His love. He felt that to save souls, to raise man up out of sin and



suffering and degradation, he must preach Christ crucified and he did it. He felt that, to lay a masterful hand on the sinking soul and control its hellward plunges, he must preach Christ, and he did it. It was Jesus only. His life was a preaching of Christ. But he is gone!

As a pastor he was without a peer. He was a true shepherd of the flock. Their welfare was his highest happiness.

I have spoken longer than I intended. A dear friend has passed away. The older ones among us may even have been saying, "Oh, the call will not come to us for a while," but when it comes to Brother Laird and we go back over our companionship of twenty-five years we must say it is a very close call. Yes, it is a close call to consecrate ourselves afresh to God's service. There's a day given to each of us. We know not how near we may be to the day appointed us to die. But, oh, may we so live that when our summons comes it may be said of us in the words of the Apostle Paul, "I hath fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day." May we fight a good fight that we

When all our warfare's past,  
Dying find our latest foe  
Under our feet at last.

for his name's sake—Amen.

REV. MR. KAY.—I am sure that every heart sympathizes with those who in this sudden bereavement lose a husband and father, a true and tender friend and protector. The Quarterly Board of this church has prepared a resolution which will now be read to you.

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FROM THE QUARTERLY BOARD.

MR. W. A. EDWARDS, on behalf of the Board, read the following resolution:

*"Resolved*, that since our late, beloved pastor, Rev. W. H. Laird, has by a startling and unlooked for call been summoned by the Great Head of the Church from the activities and fellowship of the church on earth to those engaged in by the redeemed who are "absent from the body and present with the Lord," this Quarterly Board, under a profound sense of grief and bereavement, desires to give expression to its feelings of the greatness of the loss which it and the church it represents have suffered.

"While uncomplainingly accepting the painful dispensation as the mandate of Him "Who doeth all things well," and while thankfully recognizing in it the call from labor to rest and reward of one whose work and worth alike looked forward to it as the hour of triumph, we cannot but offer our deepest and tenderest sympathies to his bereaved partner and household, to whom this

affliction deprives of a presence so worthily beloved.

"We desire to put upon record our esteem for, and appreciation of, his sweet, gentle, loving, and deeply spiritual character, and of the singularly beautiful and blameless example he placed before us in his consistent Christian life, so patient, manly, and genuine in all its relations. He was to us a faithful, earnest preacher of the Word, wise and eloquent, persuasively tender and evidently deeply solicitous for the salvation of souls. 'As a pastor, he was diligent, zealous, and broadly sympathetic; a counselor marked by great fidelity in his personal dealings; a friend true and constant, and as an administrative officer of the church, conscientious, firmly employing his office to the glory of the Master, whose he was and whom he served.'"

I am sure these remarks will testify that we have lost indeed a friend, but, oh, language fails to express our feelings, and eloquence is only found in silence.

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REV. JOHN KAY.—We pray that God will give this blessing to every member of the Board and that He will sanctify this dispensation for their good and His glory.

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HON. AND REV. R. MORETON'S ADDRESS.

(St. John Church, Presbyterian.)

It is not easy, friends, to follow after so many brethren that have preceded me and say anything that is new

or fresh. They have gone over a vast amount of ground. They have known Brother Laird much longer than I knew him. But he and I were brought to a knowledge of the truth within a very short time of each other. We were within two months of the same age and had lived together for two years in this neighborhood. I do not stand here as one of his very old and much-beloved friends—I can't lay claim to that. But I stand as one who has been intimately and closely associated with him in the work of the Lord in this city. I have had much fellowship with him. Whether greatly beloved by him, I know not and cannot say, but to me he was a brother greatly beloved. We were together very many times and in close fellowship. Outside his own denomination I suppose there was not another minister in the city who enjoyed such close fellowship as I have had with him. Time and time we have bowed down together in my study, not far from this place, pleading with God to minister to the flocks over which he and I had been made overseers. This reminds me that the last public utterance of Brother Laird was given by him in St. John Church, and that was when we were calling for those who were willing to undertake a house-to-house movement and who were longing for a fuller and more powerful baptism of the Holy Ghost. After a very strong address by a brother minister, Brother Laird rose to his feet and said: "I am thoroughly in sympathy with this

movement and with Brother Moreton's work here." That was on Thursday evening last, in St. John Presbyterian Church. He had spoken to me in my study and said: "I am not well. If this was a Methodist Church I would not have been here to-night." He told me some of his symptoms and I then told him what I thought was wrong with him. We then bowed down in prayer together and pleaded with God for blessing and help. That was the last time we bowed our heads in prayer together. We came in that evening and prayed together as we had often done before, but little did I think it was to be the last time we should meet. Dear friends, our hearts to go out to you in deepest sympathy, but for Brother Laird we say, Happy Brother Laird! Happy spirit, that is absent from the body but present with the Lord while we are speaking this afternoon! Would to God that you and I thoroughly, fully realized the fullness of that truth to-night. Death is but an incident in the life of the believer. It has crossed the track of Brother Laird, and soon it will cross ours. As it is with him, so shall it be with every man, woman, and child here to-day, and, oh, may we be like him, ready. I, as a neighbor minister, enter fully into the feelings of the sorrowing people of this church. I have, in years gone by, followed the dead to the grave to the march of military bands, the dead warriors with their swords and banners flying on their coffins. And to-day as I stood be-

side our departed brother I felt I was beside the bier of another warrior—one who fought with the sword of the Spirit, on whose head was the helmet of Salvation, who wore the breast-plate of faith and whose feet were shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace. We shall go with him to the grave and lay his body there till the morn of the resurrection, till the dead shall be raised up and we who are alive shall be caught up to meet them, and dwell forever with the Lord. I convey for the congregation of my church, the deepest, heartiest, truest sympathy—first to the bereaved widow and family, and then to the congregation over which he was overseer. To any who have failed to hear with the heart the ministrations of Brother Laird, I say, I summon you to listen and hear him who being dead, yet speaketh, and may that voice reach and touch your heart. God help every unbeliever here to become a seeker after Christ this afternoon to the glory of God and of his Holy Spirit. May God breathe on this congregation. May He take the bereaved ones to His own bosom, and pour into their wounds the oil of His consoling Spirit and heal the broken heart. May He give to each that comfort which He has promised to those who trust in His Holy name, for Christ's sake. Amen.

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RESOLUTION OF THE HAMILTON MINISTERIAL ASSOCIATION.

REV. R. J. ELLIOTT, of Hannah Street Church, represent-

ing the Ministerial Association of the City of Hamilton, then read the following resolution:

"WHEREAS, in the mysterious providence of God, we are called to mourn the loss of our friend and brother, the Rev. W. H. Laird, pastor of the First Methodist Church of this city, be it

*"Resolved*, that with humble submission to God's will we put upon record our deep sense of loss in the removal of our brother from among us, expressing at the same time our heartfelt appreciation of his many manly qualities, the kindness and geniality of his disposition, and his high character as a Christian and Minister of the Gospel:

"That we accept this dispensation as a call from God to us, as ministers, to recognize that time is short and to be more diligent than ever in the performance of the grave duties to which our lives are consecrated:

"That we convey to the bereaved widow and family of our departed brother, as also to the congregation so suddenly bereft of their pastor, our warmest Christian sympathy, and pray that the God of all consolation may grant them all needed support and comfort in their affliction, and may bring to the church and community, out of this sad bereavement, such revelations of His grace and wisdom, as will redound most to His glory and the salvation of souls."

REV. MR. KAY.—We will now sing Hymn No. 355. I have a special reason for asking you to sing this, inasmuch as it was the favorite hymn of the departed brother; and when you sing it you will remember the sentiments so often expressed by him.

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"The Lord is my Shepherd."

- 1 Thou Shepherd of Israel, and mine,  
The joy and desire of my heart,  
For closer communion I pine,  
I long to reside where thou art;  
The pasture I languish to find,  
Where all who their Shepherd obey  
Are fed, on thy bosom reclined,  
And screened from the heat of the day.
- 2 Ah, show me that happiest place,  
The place of thy people's abode,  
Where saints in an ecstasy gaze,  
And hang on their crucified Lord;  
Thy love for a sinner declare,  
Thy passion and death on the tree;  
My spirit to Calvary bear,  
To suffer and triumph with thee.
- 3 'Tis there with the lambs of thy flock,  
There only, I covet to rest,  
To lie at the foot of the rock,  
Or rise to be hid in thy breast;  
'Tis there I would always abide,  
And never a moment depart;  
Concealed in the cleft of thy side,  
Eternally held in thy heart.

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REV. MR. COLEMAN.—Now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, the fellowship and communion and indwelling of the Holy Ghost, be with us now and forever more. Amen.



On the conclusion of the service, the lid of the casket was removed, and an opportunity was afforded the congregation of gazing for the last time this side eternity upon the features of their beloved pastor.

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GONE TO HIS LONG HOME.

From *Hamilton Times*, Thursday, January 15, 1891.

The interment of the body of the late Rev. Mr. Laird, of the First Methodist Church, took place at Woodstock yesterday. The following Hamilton gentlemen accompanied the remains: Revs. T. A. Moore, R. G. Elliot, Dr. Sutherland, J. Pickering, Messrs. Thomas Morris, James Page, William Hunter, W. A. Edwards, H. Gayfer, W. Dicker, R. Raycroft, Alex. Hayes, R. L. White, ex-Ald. Mathews, Thos. Hazel, Thomas Gain, and many others.

The Woodstock *Sentinel Review* says: "On arrival at the Woodstock station a very large assemblage of friends of the deceased were in waiting on the platform. Reverently and tenderly the remains were lowered from the car and on the lid of the casket being removed, an opportunity was afforded the legion of friends of the deceased gentleman to gaze for the last time upon the countenance of him who, as a former resident of Woodstock, had endeared himself to the whole community. The Quarterly Board of the Central Methodist Church attend-

ed in a body, and representatives of the Royal Arcanum and A. O. U. W. were present to receive the remains of their departed brother. Mr. J. B. Trayes, of Port Hope, was present as the delegate of Safety Lodge, No. 101, A. O. U. W., Port Hope, of which Mr. Laird was a charter member and first P. M. W.

"The funeral then formed and moved slowly to the Methodist cemetery, via Wellington, Dundas, and Mill streets. The remains were followed to the grave by a large number of sorrowing friends. A brief ceremony at the grave was conducted by Rev. A. E. Russ and President Kay, of the Niagara Conference."

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### LINES.

DEDICATED TO MRS. (REV.) W. H. LAIRD AND FAMILY IN THEIR  
HOURS OF SAD BEREAVEMENT.

—BY REV. JOHN LAYCOCK.—

Published in the *Hamilton Times and Spectator*, Saturday, Jan. 27, 1891.

#### "DEAD."

"Dead?" Yes, our pastor's dead!  
He heard God's angel call;  
Without a struggle, or a groan,  
A last adieu, a sob, or moan,  
He pass'd Death's mystic wall.

Dead. The fond husband's dead,  
Sweet face! How calm and bright!  
The ruddy cheek, the noble brow,  
The rose-hued lips are marble now—  
The eye hath lost its light.

Dead. The kind father's dead—  
Word full of grief and pain;  
No more we'll hear his silvery voice;  
From counselings in accents choice,  
Those sealed lips shall refrain.

Dead. The true friend is dead,  
Who lived the seeds to sow  
Of kindness, mercy, godliness,  
The gospel truths that only bless  
Our fellow-men below.

Dead? No; he lives on high,  
Far, far beyond our call;  
We sadly sigh "dead" o'er his dust—  
He lives with angels and the just,  
Where Death ne'er casts his pall.

Then close the sightless eyes,  
With kisses seal them down;  
The hands, in benedictions blest,  
Oft raised, fold o'er the quiet breast,  
Whilst angels do him crown!

Farewell, dear Brother Laird!  
Thou wert a pleasant friend;  
Good-night! Soon in the morn we'll meet  
Upon God's plains of light, and greet,  
Where tears and partings end.

